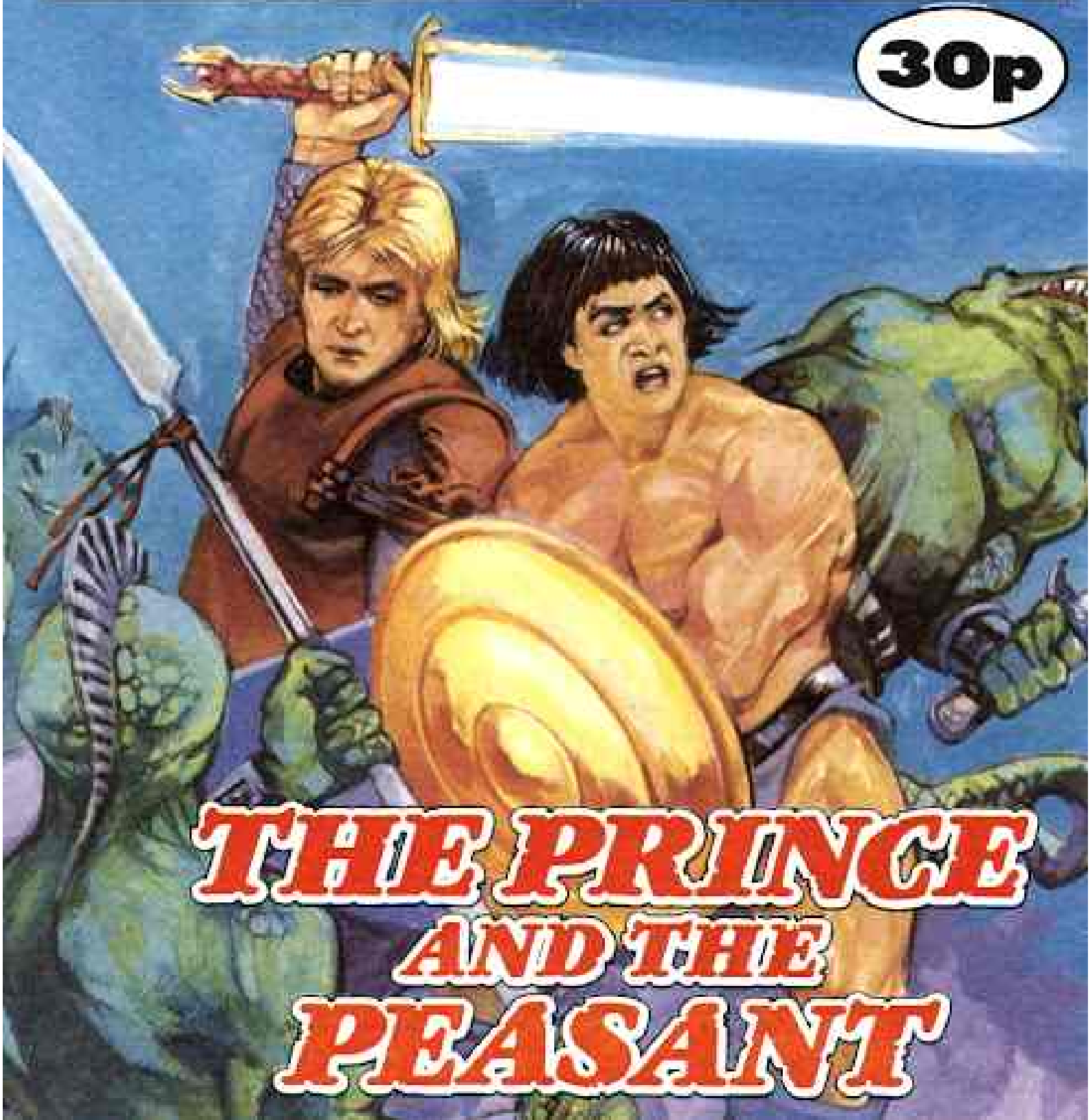
STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES

No. 238

30p



THE PRINCE AND THE PEASANT

We at "Starblazer" want to bring you the very best in Fantasy Fiction. To do that we need *your* help.

So that we can produce the kind of stories you want to read, please fill in the questionnaire on this page and send it to "Starblazer", D. C. Thomson & Co. Ltd., 185 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HS.

If you don't want to cut your issue of "Starblazer", you can copy the questionnaire onto a sheet of paper.

And there's a chance to win a full-colour print of one of our new-style wraparound covers!

The senders of the ten letters which we judge to be the most informative will each receive one of the prints. We want to hear from you NOW!

Name ..... **Age** .....

Address .....

What kind of science fiction do you most enjoy? Please tick appropriate boxes. If you dislike any type of story, place a cross in the box.

SUPERHEROES	☐	☐	**FANTASY**
DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS	☐	☐	**SWORD AND SORCERY**
POST HOLOCAUST	☐	☐	**HORROR**
ADVENTURE	☐	☐	**STAR WARS**
HUMOUR	☐	☐	**DR. WHO**
			MYSTERY

Where do you normally buy your STARBLAZER? _____

_____

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_____

Which is your favourite character? _____

Which is your favourite science fiction movie? _____

_____

Have you any comments to make about STARBLAZER. . . good or bad? _____

_____

THE PRINCE AND THE PEASANT

BLOOD ON GROUND — DEAD ALL DEAD —
YOU MAKE NO SENSE!
SQUAWK — RAIDERS — SQUAWK — VILLAGE ATTACKED — SQUAWK.

BLOOD — SQUAWK — DEAD.
WHIIIIIIGGG

MARAK REACHED HIS VILLAGE AVOIDING THE MAIN CAUSEWAY . . .
WHO WOULD DO THIS? MY PEOPLE HAVE NOTHING WORTH TAKING.

AAAAHHHHH!
THE KILLERS ARE STILL HERE.

TIS THE ARMY OF THE LORD SEPP — A MURDEROUS BARBARIAN FROM THE SOUTH.

MARAK'S FOSTER-FATHER FACED DEATH . . .
YOU CAN PERISH AS EASILY, WIZARD. NOW WHERE IS THE SHIELD?
I TELL YOU AGAIN I KNOW NOTHING OF A SHIELD.

THE SHIELD THAT GOES WITH THIS SWORD TAKEN BY ME WHEN I DESTROYED THE HOUSE OF GRODOK. WIZARD, I KNOW YOU HAVE IT, FOR ONLY YOU OF THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD ESCAPED.
LORD SEPP, I SERVED AS LIBRARIAN OF THE DUKE. YOU ATTACKED AND I FLED FOR MY LIFE. I KNOW OF NO SHIELD.
WIZARD, YOU LIE.
LORD — BEWARE!

MARAK RODE THE GREAT RORK INTO THE GATHERING . . .

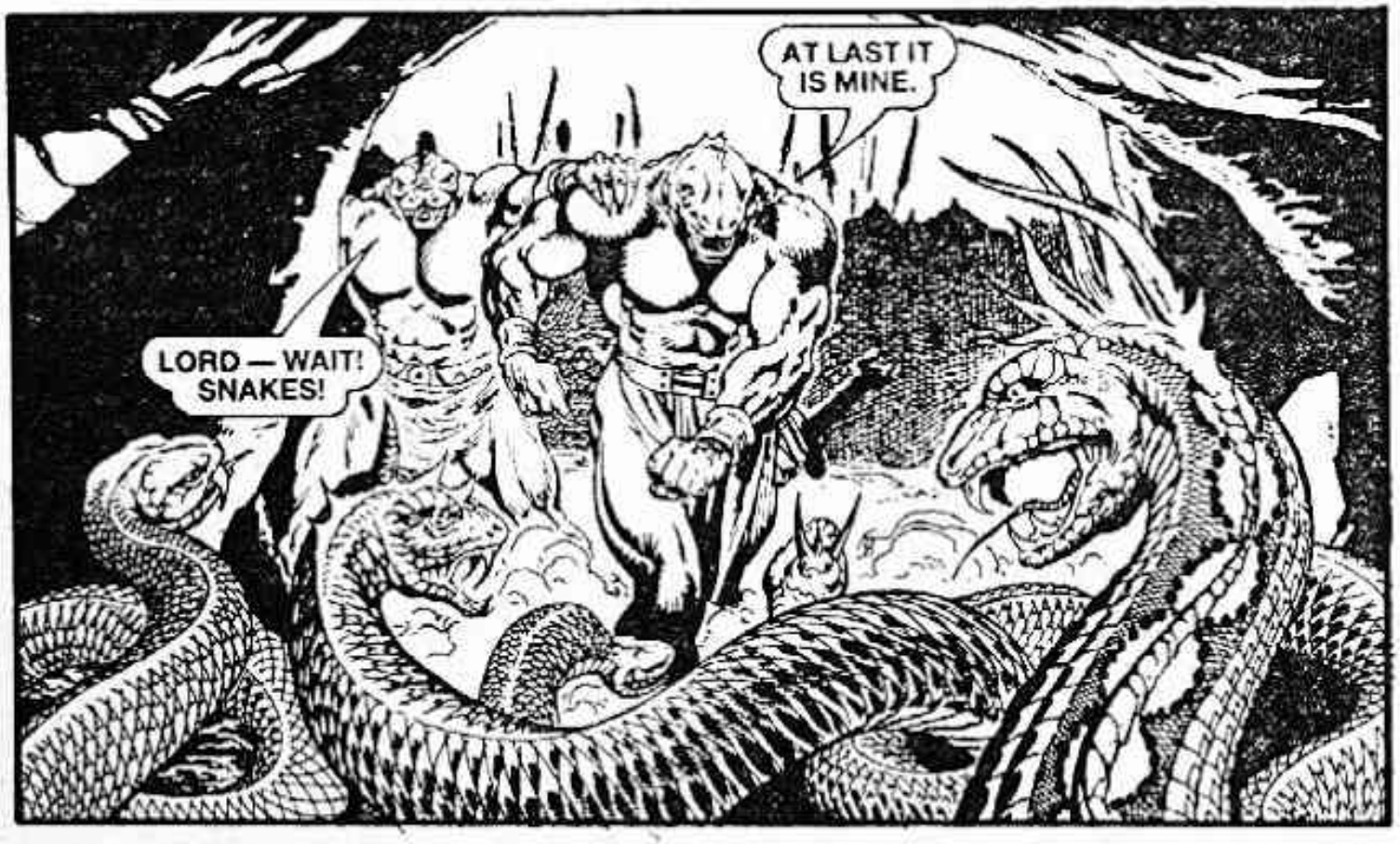
YOUR TIME HAS COME.
TIME FOR WHAT, LITTLE ONE?
THE SWORD BECAME BLINDING RADIANCE AS THE RAIDER STRUCK . . .
ERG

HAW! HAW! BOY, YOUR RORK IS WISER THAN YOU IN FEARING THE POWER OF THE SWORD. HAW! HAW! HAW!

THIS ONE CAME TO SAVE YOU, WIZARD. NOW YOU MAY WATCH HIM PERISH.
LET HIM LIVE, I BEG. I SHALL SHOW YOU TO THE SHIELD.

OLD TEACHER GUIDED THE RAIDERS . . .
MOVE THE ROCK AND YOU SHALL FIND WHAT YOU SEEK.
YOU, YOU AND YOU . . . MOVE IT!

LOOK!


AT LAST IT IS MINE.
LORD — WAIT! SNAKES!

BOY . . . FETCH THE SHIELD — OR THE OLD MAN DIES.

MAKE NO SUDDEN MOVEMENTS . . . THEY WILL NOT HARM YOU!

MARAK MOVED SLOWLY—
AS HE LIFTED THE SHIELD —
A SNAKE BEHIND IT!

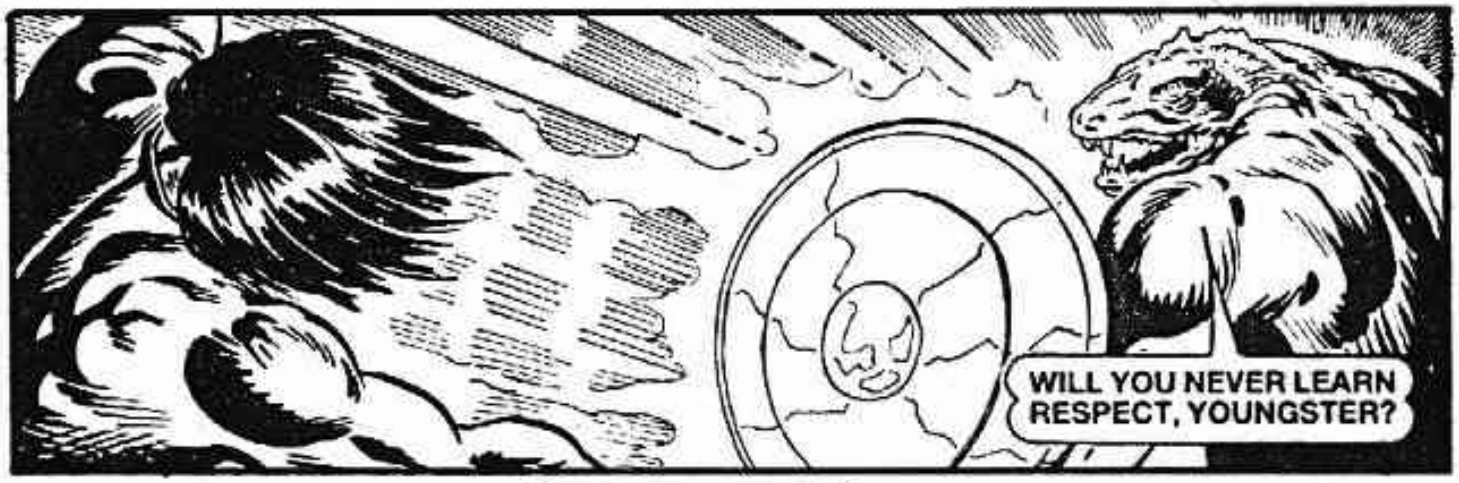
MARAK PROTECTED HIMSELF WITH THE SHIELD.

THE SHIELD GLOWED—
HUH! WHAT SORCERY IS THIS?
WOOUSH!

NOW THE HORNED ONES CLEAR A WAY! TRULY THERE IS GREAT POWER HERE.

YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WANT, LORD SEPP — SO NOW FREE MY FOSTER-PARENT.
LAD, I GRANT FREEDOM TO THE OLD ONE.

THE ULTIMATE FREEDOM.
YOU EVIL DOG!


WILL YOU NEVER LEARN RESPECT, YOUNGSTER?

THE RUNES, CHILD. READ THE RUNES — ERHHH!
HE DIES. WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY RUNES?

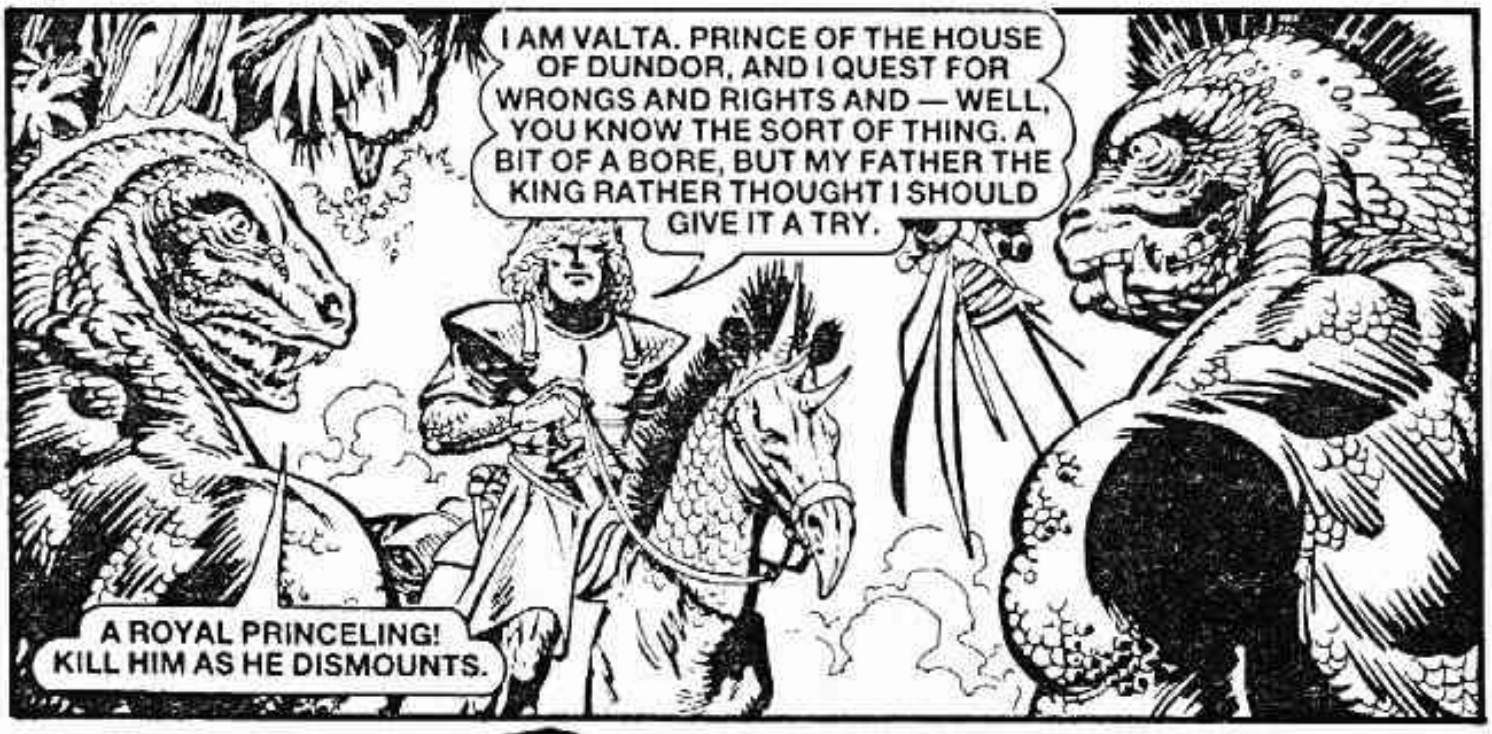
THE VILLAGE BURNED AS THE RAIDERS DEPARTED . . .
LORD, DO I FINISH OFF THIS YOUTH?
BIND HIM! A STRONG LAD WILL MAKE A GOOD PRICE IN THE NORTHLAND MARKETS.

THE MAGIC ARMS OF THE GREAT WARLORD OF GRODOK. ALL MY LIFE I HAVE SEARCHED AND NOW I HAVE THEM AND THE POWER THEY YIELD.

IN DAYS OF MARCHING THAT FOLLOWED MARAK SENSED A PRESENCE CLOSE BY . . .
MY BEASTS! THEY FOLLOW.

AT A NOONDAY HALT, A STRANGER APPEARED —
DECLARE YOURSELVES. ARE YOU OF GOOD OR EVIL WILL?
STAY YOUR SHAFT! HE MAY NOT BE ALONE.

NOBLE SIR, WE ARE PEACEFUL MERCHANTS. YOU AND YOUR COMPANIONS ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR FOOD.
KINDLY PUT AND ACCEPTED ON MY OWN BEHALF, GOOD SIR. I TRAVEL ALONE.


I AM VALTA. PRINCE OF THE HOUSE OF DUNDOR, AND I QUEST FOR WRONGS AND RIGHTS AND — WELL, YOU KNOW THE SORT OF THING. A BIT OF A BORE, BUT MY FATHER THE KING RATHER THOUGHT I SHOULD GIVE IT A TRY.
A ROYAL PRINCELING! KILL HIM AS HE DISMOUNTS.

YAAAHHHH!
ODDSBREATH! THE WELCOME BECOMES WARM.

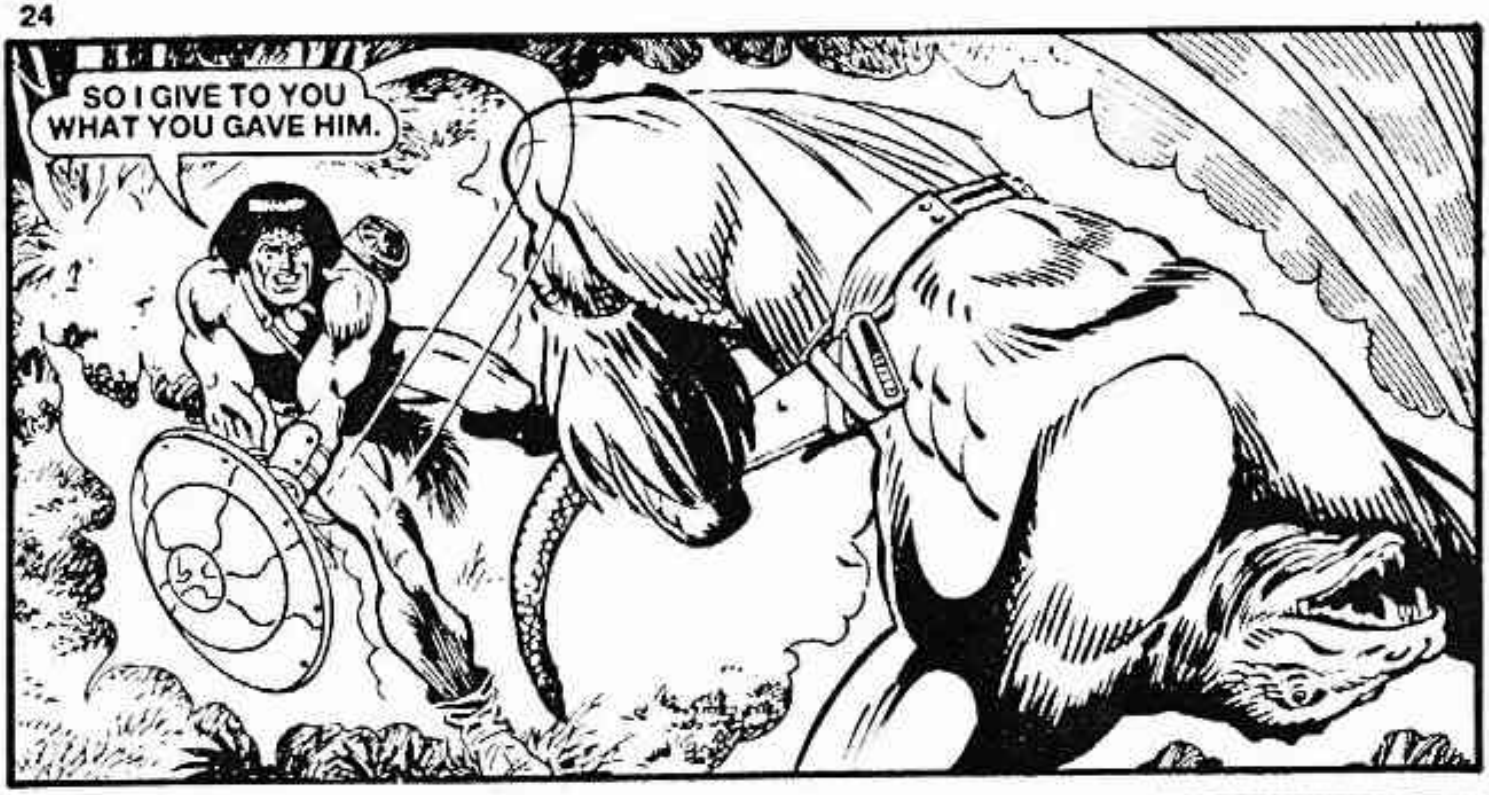
THE PRINCE WAS QUICK AND DEADLY . . .
ZOC
AH,WELL! THIS HAD BEST BE ENDED BEFORE I LOSE MORE OF MY BLOCKHEADS.
FELLOW, YOU HAVE SEEN MY DISPOSAL OF YOUR RASCALS. BE WISE AND BEG QUARTER BEFORE MY STEEL QUARTERS YOU.
LORD,YOU ARE RIGHT. IT IS ACCEPTED THAT A VILLAIN CANNOT COME OFF BEST AGAINST A HERO . . .

ODDSBREATH! SORCERY.
MARAK WHISTLED . . .
I SHALL CALL MY BEASTLY FRIENDS.

THE RESPONSE WAS IMMEDIATE—

YOU AGAIN, VILLAGE BOY! DO YOU NEVER LEARN?
YOU — FELLOW! YOU HAVE THE INSOLENCE TO TURN YOUR BACK ON ME.
AGAIN THE SHIELD FLARED—
AAAAAAHH!
I WILL DEAL WITH YOU LATER!

MARAK USED THE DISTRACTION—
LAD — WAIT! LET YOU AND I TALK!
OLD TEACHER ONCE SAID THAT A GIFT CAN SAY MORE THAN WORDS . . .


SO I GIVE TO YOU WHAT YOU GAVE HIM.

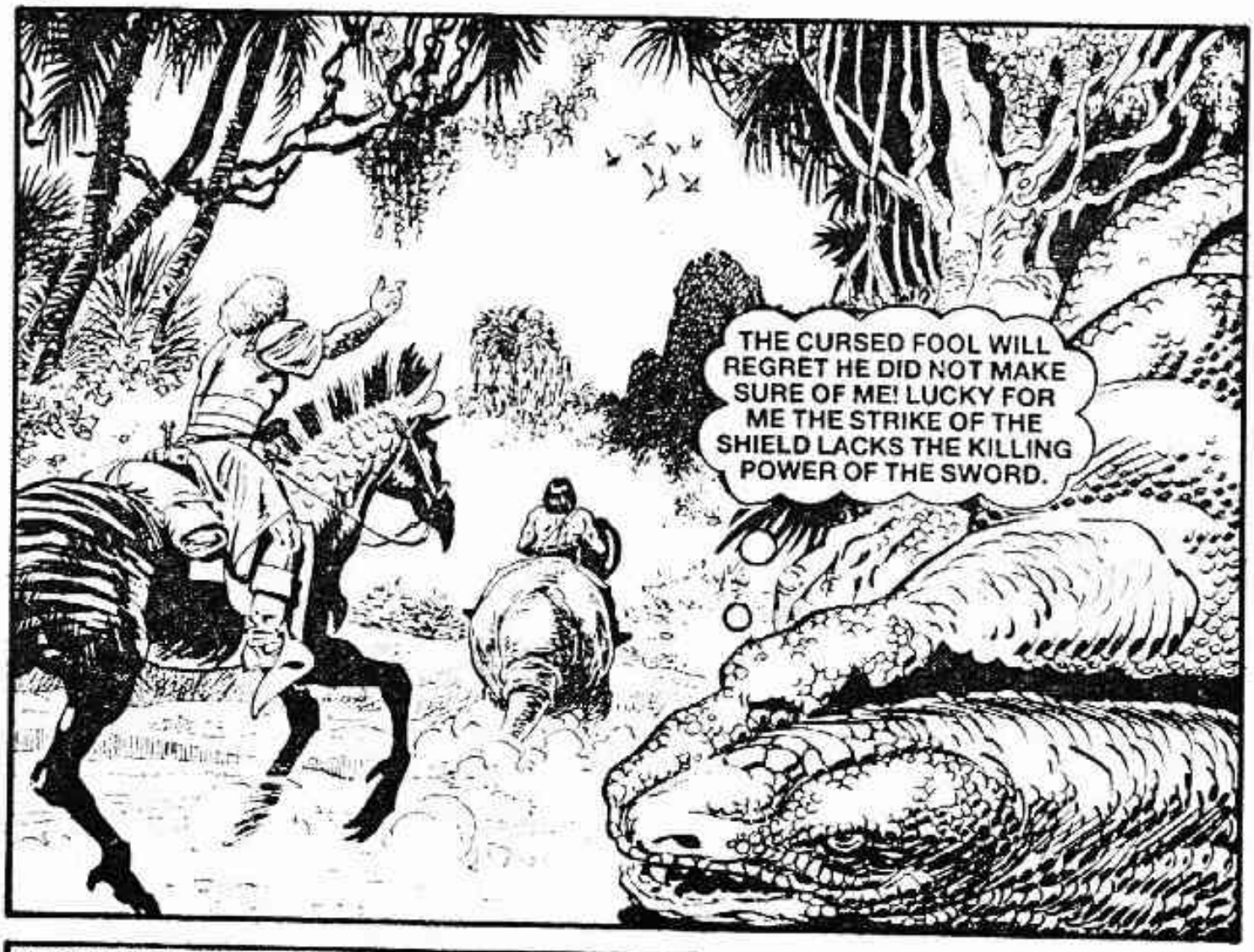
VALTA PICKED UP THE SWORD OF GRODOK —
BEWARE! THE PACK COMES.

MARAK FOUND HIMSELF BACK-TO-BACK WITH NOBILITY . . .

SEND SHAFTS INTO THEM.
ODDSBREATH! THERE IS A POWER IN THESE WEAPONS.
TUMP TUMP
CROSSBOW ARROWS WERE TURNED AGAINST THEIR USERS . . .
ZAC
FLEE, LADS. SAVE YOURSELVES FROM THIS WIZARDRY.
URP

VICTORY IS MINE, THOUGH I GENEROUSLY ADMIT TO A LITTLE HELP FROM YOU, CLODHOPPER.
THE LORD IS KIND.

FELLOW, I AM IN TRUTH WELL PLEASED WITH YOU AND OFFER A PLACE IN MY SERVICE.
AN HONOUR, BUT I HAVE MY OWN PLANS.


THE CURSED FOOL WILL REGRET HE DID NOT MAKE SURE OF ME! LUCKY FOR ME THE STRIKE OF THE SHIELD LACKS THE KILLING POWER OF THE SWORD.

NIGHT SETTLED ON TWO ILL-MATCHED COMPANIONS . . .
I GO YOUR WAY BECAUSE IT IS MY ROYAL DUTY TO DRIVE THESE ACCURSED INVADERS FROM MY COUNTRY.
I MUST FIND SOME MYSTERY CALLED RUNES WHICH AN OLD MAN ASKED ME TO READ.

RUNES! WHY, THESE ARE RUNES INSCRIBED ON THE BLADE OF MY NEW SWORD.
THEY ARE? THE SAME MARKING IS ON THE BACK OF THE SHIELD. LORD, WOULD YOU READ THEM FOR ME?
READ! SUCH LOWLY LEARNING IS NOT FOR A PRINCE OF THE HOUSE OF DUNDOR. WE NATURALLY HAD OUR LIBRARY — NO LESS THAN FOUR BOOKS, ALL FINELY WROTE, AND A HIRELING TO READ THEM FOR US — HAH! KLON, OUR LIBRARIAN. HE COULD READ THESE RUNES.
PRINCE, HOW DO I FIND THIS KLON?
YOU DO NOT FIND HIM — I DO. THE SHIELD OBVIOUSLY IS MINE SINCE IT GOES SO WELL WITH MY NEW SWORD. YOU WILL OBLIGE ME BY HANDING OVER MY PROPERTY.
NO — IT IS MINE. MY FATHER WAS KILLED FOR IT . . . WITH ME IT STAYS.

FELLOW, DO NOT ANGER ME OR I SHALL BE COMPELLED TO STRIKE YOU DOWN.
YOU DO NOT GET THE SHIELD.

PRINCE VALTA STRUCK . . .

THE POWER OF THESE ARMS MATCHES US TOO EVENLY! WHAT SAY YOU TO SEEKING OUT THE MEANING OF THE RUNES TOGETHER?
I SAY THAT SOUNDS MUCH LESS PAINFUL THAN THIS WAY.

UNITED IN UNEASY TRUCE, THE PAIR TRAVELLED FOR SEVERAL DAYS . . .
KLON LOST HIS PLACE AND NEARLY HIS HEAD WHEN MY FATHER, THE KING, DISCOVERED HIM DOING A TRADE IN BAD SPELLS AND WORSE POISONS. THE LAST I HEARD HE HAD RETIRED TO THIS PLACE IN THE MARKLAND THICKETS TO STUDY SOME SERIOUS SORCERY . . .

AN UNEVENTFUL JOURNEY SAVE FOR ODD INCIDENTS . . .
BLOOD — SQUAWK — SQUAWK —DEAD, ALL DEAD.
WHAT'S GOT INTO OMEN?

AH — ER, JUST COMING TO AWAKEN YOU.
I PREFER NOT TO BE ROUSED BY A SWORD, PRINCELING.

THEY CAME TO A WILDERNESS OF THICK SCRUB . . .
THAT LOOKS LIKE OLD KLON'S DOOR-PLATE.
THE PATH IS TOO NARROW FOR THE BEASTS. WE SHALL NEED TO GO ON AFOOT.

BLOOD — SQUAWK — BEWARE.
WAIT! OMEN GIVES WARNING.
DO YOU EXPECT ME TO HEED THE CROAKING OF A BIRD?

ARGH!

THOSE CROAKS COULD HAVE SAVED YOU A TUMBLE, PRINCELING.
I SHALL IGNORE YOUR INSOLENCE. KINDLY ASSIST ME FROM THIS HOLE.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING? STAY, I COMMAND YOU.
SOMEBODY COMES!

THE BELL SOUNDS TO TELL OF A CATCH, GRIMBLE, BUT WHAT? A WILD CREATURE PERHAPS — OR A MANTHING WITH USEFUL BELONGINGS.

YOU ARE BACK — AH, IT IS YOU, KLON. HELP ME OUT OF THIS RIDICULOUS PITFALL.
HELP A PAMPERED JACKANAPES WHO MORE THAN ONCE LAID A LASH ACROSS MY BACK! WELL, PERHAPS I WILL — IN A MONTH OR TWO.

WHY WAIT? WHY NOT NOW?
HUH — ER, AT ONCE! GRIMBLE AND I WERE JUST HAVING OUR LITTLE JOKE.

A THICK GRASS ROPE WAS PRODUCED . . .
OLD VILLAIN, YOU WOULD BE A HEAD SHORTER DID I NOT NEED YOU.
HIGHNESS, OF COURSE YOU NEED ME. WHY ELSE WOULD YOU BE HERE.

WE HAVE RUNES THAT WE NEED READ.
RUNES, EH! SPECIAL MAGIC OF THAT KIND CALLS FOR RICH PAYMENT IN SILVER.

NAY, YOU MAY NOT HOLD THE BLADE. LOOK AND READ WHAT IS WRITTEN, THEN DO THE SAME WITH THE SHIELD.
RUNES OF THE OLD ONES, EH! THIS WILL TAKE TIME.

KLON BECAME BUSY . . .
ALREADY I SEE THIS IS A FINE PUZZLE.

THE OLD RASCAL IS REALLY MOST LEARNED. ONCE HE DESIGNED A THING OF BEADS ON STRINGS THAT MAKES POSSIBLE A COUNTING BEYOND A HUNDRED.
WHAT IS COUNTING?

ANOTHER DAY DAWNED . . .
I HAVE IT — A PUZZLE IN A RIDDLE SOLVED BY A MIXING OF BOTH RUNES. THE ANSWER IS 'SWORD LAID ON SHIELD SHALL POINT THE WAY'.
IMPOSSIBLE! PLACE TOGETHER THOSE TWO AND THERE IS FIRE AND FURY.
FELLOW, I CALL TRUCE. I PLEDGE PEACE TO YOU IN THE TESTING OF THIS MESSAGE.
I AGREE TO THE SAME.
SHIELD AND SWORD CAME TOGETHER . . .
SO FAR NO FIRE AND FURY.
ON MY WORD WE EACH RELEASE HOLD AND MOVE BACK — QUICKLY.

NOW!
CLANC
CLONC!
THEY TOUCH — AND NOTHING. I WOULD SAY THAT IT TAKES VIOLENCE TO AROUSE A VIOLENT RESPONSE.
THE SWORD MOVES!
IT TURNS!

THE SWORD POINTS THE WAY — THIS WAY.

MARK AND VALTA RECOVERED SHIELD AND SWORD . . .
SOUTHWARD! WELL, I KNOW NOT WHAT AWAITS IN THAT WILD COUNTRY, BUT OBVIOUSLY IT IS A QUEST OF WHICH MY FATHER WOULD APPROVE.

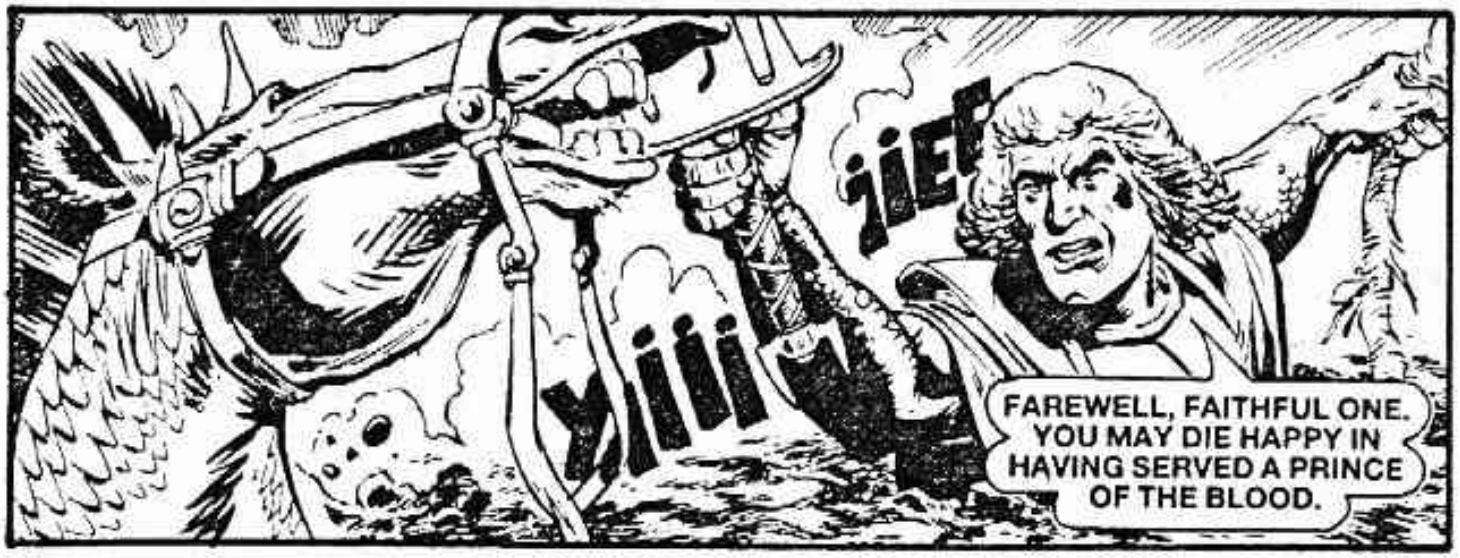
HIGHNESS, FORGET MY FEE AND ALLOW ME TO ACCOMPANY YOU. A WIZARD CAN BE USEFUL ON A JOURNEY.
THAT IS TRUE AND YOUR COOKING IS GOOD — AS LONG AS ONE TAKES ACCOUNT OF YOUR TALENT WITH POISONS.

HE IS SO ODDLY EAGER TO RISK HIS HIDE THAT I WONDER IF HE TOLD ALL THAT WAS WRITTEN IN THE RUNES.

DAYS BECAME WEEKS AS THE SEEKERS FOLLOWED THE LINE OF THE SWORD ACROSS A MARSHY DESOLATION . . .

MARAK!
AAAH!
CRU
TROOFP!

BIND THE LINE TO YOUR SADDLE GIRTH AND THE RORK WILL HAUL IT FREE.
ITS LEGS ARE BROKEN.


iiEE
yiii
FAREWELL, FAITHFUL ONE. YOU MAY DIE HAPPY IN HAVING SERVED A PRINCE OF THE BLOOD.

FELLOW, SEEMINGLY I MUST TAKE OVER YOUR MOUNTAIN OF A RORK.
HIGHNESS, SEEMINGLY I THINK NOT.
FELLOW — ER, MARAK, I SHALL BE GENEROUS. WE SHALL SHARE THE BRUTE AND THERE WILL BE TRUCE WHILE WE RIDE.
I SHALL THINK ABOUT IT.
THEY MOVED INTO A BITTER COLD . . .
I HAVE HEARD OF THIS — THE WHITE WILDERNESS, EVER FROZEN.

WE HAVE A WATCHER.

HE IS GONE, BUT I CLEARLY SAW HIM. A BEING IN SHAGGY ANIMAL SKINS.
MOST LIKELY A HUNTER FROM A NOMAD BAND.

THE 'HUNTER' RETURNED TO HIS CAMP . . .
SO THEY MOVE OUT INTO THE WHITENESS. THEIR TRAIL WILL BE EASY TO FOLLOW — I SHALL AVENGE MYSELF.

DAWN IN THE WHITE WILDERNESS . . .
THE LIGHT COMES, YOUNG GENTLEMEN. TIME FOR OUR DAILY SIGHTING OF THE SWORD.
IT POINTS DIRECTLY AT YONDER MOUNTAIN — THAT SHINING MOUNTAIN.

THERE IS A LEGEND ABOUT A SHINING MOUNTAIN AND A FALLING STAR THAT CAME DOWN UPON IT. THE STAR BROKE OPEN AND OUT CAME GIANTS WITH A TREAD THAT SHOOK THE GROUND, BUT A SPELL WAS ON THEM AND ONE BY ONE THEY PERISHED.

EACH DAWN THE SWORD POINTED AND THE MOUNTAIN BECKONED, UNTIL AFTER THREE DAYS —
THAT IS THE WAY, BUT ONLY IF WE CAN WALK THROUGH ROCK.

OMEN HAS FOUND US A CRACK.
GRAC!

THE GREAT RORK HAD TO BE LEFT OUTSIDE THE FISSURE . . .

SIGHT OF SUCH DEPTHS GIVES ME A DIZZINESS.
DON'T LOOK! CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TREAD AS I DIRECT YOU.

GRAC!
RUINS — BUT OF WHAT? NEVER HAVE I SEEN A BUILDING OF SUCH SIZE OR CURIOUS SHAPE.

THEY CLOSED ON THE RUINS . . .
IT IS NOT BUILT INTO THE GROUND, BUT SITS ON IT LIKE A GREAT BIRD.
HOW COULD THERE EVER BE A BIRD OF METAL?

THIS SEEMS TO BE A DOOR, BUT IT IS SHUT FAST.
STAND ASIDE WHILE I OPEN IT.

WH
OSH!
THIS IS HOW IT OPENS!
NOT A SCRATCH — NOT EVEN HARMED.
THE DOOR OPENED WITH A SUDDEN UNLEASHING OF AIR . . .

THE AIR MOVED! IT WAS LIKE BEING THE PLAYTHING OF A HIGH WIND.
A STORM THAT APPEARS BLOWN-OUT UNLESS THIS BE JUST A LULL.

THIS TRULY IS SORCERY.
LOOK!

A SLEEPING GIANT!
THE FINAL SLEEP OF ALL — THE LAST REST OF A GIANT FROM THE STARS AS THE RUNES NAME THEM.

OLD VILLAIN, I KNEW IT. YOU DID NOT TELL ALL THAT WAS WRIT IN THE RUNES.
HIGHNESS, I TOLD ALL THAT WAS NEEDED. ARE WE NOT HERE NOW BECAUSE OF ME?

STOP SQUABBLING AND LOOK HERE. THIS THING GLOWS WHEN I PASS MY HAND OVER IT.
BBB!

IT OPENS!
BBZZZ
THE AIR MOVES AGAIN— THOUGH NOT SO MUCH.

THE THREE ENTERED THE PLACE OF THE GIANT . . .
LOOK — ARMS! A SHIELD LIKE MINE AND A SWORD LIKE YOURS.
WHERE?

SO NOW YOU HAVE A SWORD. I DEMAND THE OTHER SHIELD.
YOU MAY HAVE IT.

HERE IS SORCERY. THE FACE MELTS AND FLOWS.

DUST! THE GIANT BECOMES DUST.
LET US GET AWAY FROM SUCH WIZARDRY.

KLON, WE ARE GOING.
I COME.
CAN THIS BE THE TOKEN OF MIGHT OF WHICH THE RUNES SPOKE?

THEN INTO DAYLIGHT . . .
MARAK, A TEST OF OUR NEW WEAPONS TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE THE FIRE.
VERY WELL— BUT GENTLY.

HOH-HAH! THEY HAVE THE POWER.
WOO
UUG

LIGHTNING FLASHED AND A ROCK OUTCROP SHATTERED . . .
WHA . . . ??
BRAM

HIGHNESS, THIS IS THE TRUE POWER. THIS RELEASED THE DEVASTATION YOU HAVE JUST WITNESSED.
KLON, I MUST HAVE IT.

NAY, HIGHNESS, I SHALL RULE AND YOU MAY BE FIRST TO PAY HOMAGE WITH A BENDING OF YOUR KNEE!
WHAT? YOU TREACHEROUS WIZARD — NEVER.

SUDDENLY —
ZUMM
THEN, HIGHNESS, YOU PERISH — ARGHHH!

VALTA — BEWARE.
WOOSH
THE TERM HIGHNESS SUITS BETTER. LET US NOT BECOME TOO FAMILIAR.

IT IS HE — LORD SEPP, THE KILLER OF OLD TEACHER.

SUDDENLY FURIOUS, MARAK CUT HIS WAY THROUGH THE ATTACKERS . . .

BUT SEPP HAD PICKED UP THE STRANGE WEAPON —
THE VILLAGE BOY! A MISTAKE ABOUT TO BE CORRECTED.

URGH
GRIMBLE LEAPED FROM THE BODY OF KLON . . .

EVIL PEST! NOW FOR THE VILLAGE BRAT.
FHIIISS

MARAK CAST HIS SWORD.
THAT FOR OLD TEACHER AND MY MURDERED PEOPLE.
FLAG

THIS THING IS EVIL!

MARAK, DEAR FRIEND, I MUST HAVE THIS WEAPON.

I SUPPOSE YOU MUST — AS MUST ANY MAN WHO KNOWS ITS AWESOME POWER.

HIGHNESS, LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS.
AH SO! YOU LEARN QUICKLY, FELLOW.

MARAK ADDED HIS OWN SWORD AND SHIELD TO THOSE OF VALTA . . .
NOW YOU HAVE ALL THE POWER.
SO I DO!

WIFZ!
AND POWER CORRUPTS PEOPLE!

MARAK AND VALTA DEPARTED THE METAL TOMB OF THE GIANT—
A CUNNING PLOY. YOU NOW HOLD ALL THE POWER IN YOUR HAND.
THAT IS TRUE, HIGHNESS.

NOW I EMPTY MY HAND.

MADNESS! YOU ARE MAD.
BRAUM

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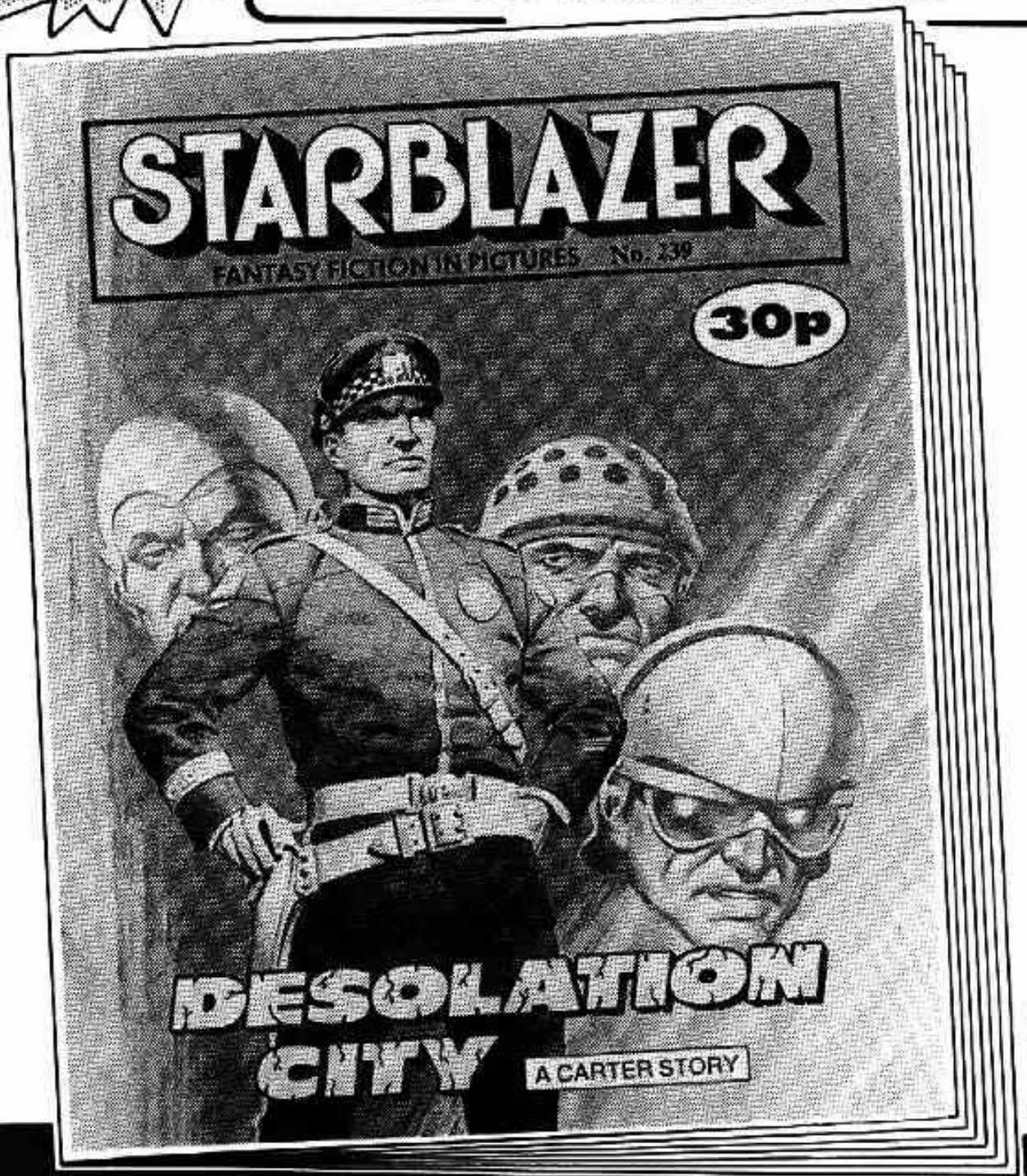
DON'T MISS

THIS MONTH'S OTHER ACTION-PACKED ADVENTURE



NOW ON SALE

THE PRINCE AND THE PEASANT

The gigantic warriors of Reptilia laid waste another Earth in another time. Little resistance was put up as they ploughed their gory path through town and village. Not a man, woman or child dared stand in their way. But then fate took a hand. Prince Valta, of the deposed ruling house of Grodok, and Marak, a herdsman, had to become brothers in arms . . . because between them they possessed Mankind's only hope of survival — the sacred Sword and Shield of Grodok.

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